



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

August 30, 2010

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Maryland Public Service Commission to Hold Public Hearing on Pepco Reliability TONIGHT, Monday, Aug. 30, in Rockville

8 County Councilmembers Will Testify at Council Office Building; Residents Encouraged to Relate Experiences to PSC; Speakers Must Sign In 30 Minutes Before Hearing in Rockville

ROCKVILLE, Md., August 30, 2010—The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) TONIGHT, Monday, Aug. 30, will continue its investigation into “the reliability of Potomac Electric Power Company’s (Pepco) electric distribution system and the quality of electric distribution service that Pepco is providing its customers” by holding a public hearing at the Montgomery County Council’s Stella Werner Office Building in Rockville. The hearing will begin at 6 p.m. and will be televised live on County Cable Montgomery (CCM).

The public hearing will be held in the third floor hearing room of the Council Office Building at 100 Maryland Ave. Residents wishing to speak must sign in at the hearing room starting at 5:30 p.m. Speakers will be limited to a maximum of five minutes.

Eight members of the Montgomery County Council will be among tonight’s speakers. Council President Nancy Floreen, Vice President Valerie Ervin and Councilmembers Phil Andrews, Roger Berliner, Marc Elrich, George Leventhal, Nancy Navarro and Duchy Trachtenberg will testify. County Executive Isiah Leggett also is scheduled to testify.

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Written comments may be filed by Aug. 31. Originally signed comments on paper may be submitted to Terry J. Romine, Executive Secretary, Maryland Public Service Commission, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. Comments must reference “Case No. 9240—Public Comment.” To ensure comments are entered into the PSC docket system, all comments must be mailed or hand-delivered. Comments sent via e-mail or fax will not be entered into the Commission’s docket system.

The public hearing will be televised live by County Cable Montgomery (CCM—Cable Channel 6 on Comcast and RCN, Channel 30 on Verizon). The broadcast also can be viewed via streaming through the County Web site at www.montgomerycountymd.gov.

The Public Service Commission announced on Aug. 12 that it would begin the investigation after morning and afternoon storms that day left more than 90,000 customers without power. On July 29, following a storm that left more than 200,000 residents without power, the Montgomery County Council, at the urging of Councilmember Roger Berliner, unanimously sent a letter to the Public Service Commission asking for just such an investigation.

On Aug. 14, Council President Floreen spoke with Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley and told him that the continual series of outages year-round in Montgomery County has made establishing more reliable electric service from the utility “a top priority.”

The PSC began its investigation on Aug. 17 by questioning Pepco officials at a hearing in Baltimore.

The Commission has stated that the investigation was being initiated “because of the frequency, number and duration of the power outages experienced by customer in the Pepco service area and the apparent breakdown of adequate communication between the company and its customer during these outage events.” The Commission went on to say that it “finds it necessary to conduct an immediate investigation into the reliability of the Pepco distribution system and the quality of distribution service Pepco is providing its customers, including but not limited to its performance during and following severe storms, and a comprehensive examination of Pepco’s storm preparedness and reliability.”

The County Council’s letter of July 29 asking for an investigation cited many of the same concerns the PSC identified in deciding to act. In their letter, Councilmembers wrote: “We are writing to ask the Commission to open an investigation into the reliability of electricity in Pepco’s Montgomery County’s service territory. Our residents and businesses have suffered an unacceptable number and duration of outages for many years, outages that have harmed public health, public safety and the County’s economy. As a distribution-only utility, the quality and reliability of Pepco’s service is exclusively within your authority. We ask you to invoke that authority to ensure our citizens of acceptable levels of reliability.”

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